



NORTHERN LIGHTS AT
COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT

Recognized Communities of Practice

November 2023

What is a Community of Practice?

A community of practice (CoP) is a multi-session, facilitated conversation among members of a particular group with a goal of creating positive change related to an area of common interest.



Topic



Community



**Resources and
Activities**



Topic

- Communities of Practice are formed to explore a topic or area of shared inquiry.
- This often includes the key issues the group plans to learn about and explore.
- The CoP topic should be connected to a purpose or positive change - groups should define what is the end they hope will result from this community of practice.



Community

- Some communities of practice form within already established groups such as a Vermont Early Childhood Network or a Director Network.
- Others form around a particular topic of interest or a community challenge.
- Groups should identify who will be invited to participate in this community of practice.
- The members may share a role, a level of experience, or another common factor.



Resources and Activities

- Identify what resources and materials you'll need to be successful. This may include kickoff trainings, data detailing a particular challenge, examples of best practices, guest speakers, links to resources, etc.
- You should also describe the types of resources and materials you will use during the community of practice to support learning and growth, and the types of end product materials your community of practice will create.

Why Communities of Practice (CoPs)?

CoPs provide a method to connect professional, facilitated, peer-learning opportunities with professional development systems

Communities of Practice vs Trainings

- Purpose: to explore a topic collaboratively with a group
 - Guided by a Facilitator
 - Participants co-create learning opportunities
 - Multi-session
 - The learning focus evolves throughout the CoP
- Purpose: to learn new information from an expert
 - Led by a Trainer/Instructor
 - Trainer provides content and guides learning
 - May be single or multi-session
 - Learning objectives are determined in advance



Recognized Communities of Practice

- A type of CoP that is recognized by the Child Development Division as meeting criteria for participation to count toward professional development hours for child care licensing.
- Full completion of a Recognized CoP is entered in BFIS Quality Credentialing Accounts. Training hours from partial completion of a Recognized CoP will also be entered into BFIS.



Criteria:

- Offered by an approved Sponsor
- Minimum of 4 sessions (recommended at least 6-8 sessions)
- Facilitator must meet minimum qualifications
 - At least an associate degree; and
 - At least 5 years of experience in area of expertise, at least two of which were in a supervisory, coaching, consulting, or leadership role; and
 - Completed coursework or training in facilitation, mentoring, coaching, and/or consulting; and
 - Completed State-identified community of practice facilitation training*
- Facilitator must be listed in Instructor Registry as CoP Facilitator

*As of 11/16/23 this criterion is currently waived as the State-identified CoP facilitation training is not yet available. See the Northern Lights website for updates

Process:



1. Sponsor identifies facilitator and completes Recognized Community of Practice form.
2. Sponsor submits Recognized Community of Practice form to Northern Lights for review and feedback (for first CoP).
3. Sponsor uses the Submit a Training form if they wish their CoP to be open to the public.
4. Sponsor submits attendance to Northern Lights immediately following the conclusion of their CoP or at least quarterly for an ongoing CoP.
5. Northern Lights enters professional development hours into BFIS Quality Credentialing accounts.

Rollout Timeline:



November 2023

- Northern Lights releases information to sponsors about upcoming ability to offer Recognized CoPs
- Sponsors can begin submitting Recognized CoP Forms to Northern Lights for review and feedback

December 2023

- Beginning 12/1/23: Individuals interested in becoming a CoP facilitator can submit or update their Instructor Registry application
- Beginning 12/5/23: Sponsors can submit Recognized CoPs to the Northern Lights Training Calendar using the Submit a Training form

January 2024

- Sponsors may begin to offer Recognized CoPs!

Unified Core Knowledge Areas

1 Child Development and Learning

2 Family and Community Partnerships

3 Developmentally Appropriate and Inclusive Practices

4 Curriculum and Learning Environments

5 Observation and Assessment

6 Professionalism and Ethical Practice

7 Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice

8 Safety and Wellness

9 Program Planning and Development

Core knowledge areas #7, 8, and 9 are included in the professional standards for afterschool professionals. These knowledge areas are not included in the early childhood standards referenced below.

Learn more at: www.northernlightscv.org

Example #1



Topic: Deepening Developmentally Appropriate Practice
CKA: Developmentally Appropriate and Inclusive Practices



Community: Advanced practitioners with deep knowledge about developmentally appropriate practice



Resources and Activities:

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8, Fourth Edition (NAEYC)

Example #2



Topic: Culminating Seminar
CKA: Professionalism and Ethical Practice



Community: Program Directors working toward completion of Step 3 of the Program Director Credential



Resources and Activities:
Training sessions with content experts scheduled based on results of self-assessment of CoP members

Example #3



Topic: Beyond the Book: Unpack your Impact
CKA: Professionalism and Ethical Practice



Community: Experienced educators interested in examining the intersection between equity and ECE



Resources and Activities:

Unpack Your Impact: How two primary teachers ditched problematic lessons and built a culture-centered curriculum by Naomi O'Brien and Lanesha Tabb

Questions?



Recognized Communities of Practice